UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.165/PC.3/INF.4
9 January 1996

ENGLISH ONLY

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
(HABITAT II)

Third session
New York
5 - 16 February 1996
Item 3 of the provisional agenda
Preparation for the Conference

REPORT ON THE DUBAI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretariat

96-00898
NB/9 Jan-96/RD-1/E

1 The Dubai International Conference for Habitat II on Best Practices in Improving the Living Environment brought together over 800 delegates from governments, local authorities, United Nations Agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), professional associations and the private sector, from 19 to 22 November 1995. The Conference reviewed a selection of 29 "Best Practices" documented for the Habitat II Conference.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. *Best Practices presented*

2. The following 29 Best Practices were presented:
- Leicester: Environment City, Leicester, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Integrated Urban Management, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- The Government Housing Bank, Thailand
- Furnished Hostels in the *Ile de France*, France
- National Association of Colombian "Recicladores", Colombia
- Community-Based Refuse Collection and Recycling, Municipality of Rufisque, Senegal
- Revitalizing Metro-Toronto's Mainstreets, Toronto, Canada
- Leveraging Public and Private Sector Resources for Housing, Hong Kong
- Providing Security of Tenure for the Poor, Municipality of Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- Urban Management of Structural Transformation, Duisburg, Germany
- Urban Renewal in Vienna, Austria
- The Kampung Improvement Programme, Indonesia
- City Management in Tilburg, Germany
- Partnerships for Poverty Alleviation in Cebu City, Philippines
- Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), India
- Build Together: National Housing Programme of Namibia
- Improving Living Environments Through Comprehensive Local Policy, Gothenburg, Sweden
- Tehran's Action Plans for Improving the Living Environment, Iran
- The Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project, United Republic of Tanzania
- Hamilton-Wentworth's Sustainable Community, Canada
- Serviced Land Project, Cape Town, South Africa
- The Small and Micro Enterprises Project, Alexandria Businessmen's Association, Egypt
- Post-Disaster Reconstruction and Rehabilitation in Anhui, China
- Sustainable Communities, Chattanooga, Tennessee, United States of America
- A National NGO: The Swedish Union of Tenants, Sweden
- Small Format Aerial Photography for Planning, Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Urban Reconstruction of a War-Torn City Centre, Beirut, Lebanon
- Housing Settlement Project in Shanghai, China
- Improving Living Environments for Low-Income Households in Saudi Arabia.

3. The following local authority associations were present: G4+ Associations of Local Authorities; International Union of Local Authorities (IULA); United Towns Organization (UTO); Arab Towns Organization (ATO); Union des Villes Africaines (UVA); CityNet; World Association of Metropolises (Metropolis); International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI); Association of Local Authorities of the Gambia; and Association of Local Authorities of the United Kingdom.

4. In addition to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) were present. The following specialized agencies were also present: United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); and World Meterological Organization (WMO).

5. Over fifty international, regional and national non-governmental organizations were present.

B. *Organization of work*

6. The Conference was organized into an opening session, four plenary sessions, three parallel sessions, several special sessions and an exhibition, and a concluding session.

7. The Opening Session started with a welcome statement by H. H. Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Chairman of Dubai Municipality, on behalf of H. H. Sheikh Maktoum Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of Dubai. It was followed by statements by H.E. Ms. Gorel Thurdin, Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament; H.E. Professor Klaus Toepfer, Minister for Housing, Construction and Physical Planning, the Federal Republic of Germany; and a keynote address by Dr. Wally N'Dow, Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). Then, H.H. Sheikh Al Maktoum opened the exhibition entitled "Towards Better Development".

8. Plenary Session I, "Improving Effectiveness and Efficiency", was chaired by H.E. Prof. Klaus Toepfer, Minister for Housing, Construction and Physical Planning, Federal Republic of Germany, and discussed the following case studies: Environmental City of Leicester, UK; Integrated Urban Management, Dubai, UAE; and the Government Housing Bank, Thailand.

9. Plenary Session II, "Strengthening Civic Society", was chaired by Mr. Ferry Sonneville, World President, International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), and discussed the following cases: Furnished Hostels in the *Ile de France*; National Association of Colombian "Recicladores"; Community-Based Refuse Collection and Recycling, Municipality of Rufisque, Senegal; and, Revitalizing Metro-Toronto's Mainstreets, Toronto, Canada.

10. Plenary Session III, "Towards Sustainable Land-Use Housing and Services", was chaired by Ms. Beate Weber, Lady Mayor of Heidelberg, and discussed the following case studies: Leveraging Public and Private Sector Resources for Housing, Hong Kong; Providing Security of Tenure for the Poor, Municipality of Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Urban Management of Structural Transformation, Duisburg, Germany; Urban Renewal in Vienna, Austria; and, the Kampung Improvement Programme, Indonesia.

11. Parallel Session I, "Partnerships with People", was co-chaired over two days; Mr. Thierno Biraim N'Dow, Mayor of Kaffine, Senegal, chaired the first session; and H.E. Mr. James E. Wapakhabulo, Minister Without Portfolio of Uganda, chaired the repeat session. The Best Practices discussed included: City Management in Tilburg, Germany; Partnerships for Poverty Alleviation in Cebu City, Philippines; Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP), India; and Build Together: the National Housing Programme of Namibia.

12. Parallel Session II, "Partnerships for the Environment", was co-chaired over two days; Mr. Andrew Horgan, Secretary-General of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), chaired the first session; and Mr. Paul Bongers, Director, Local Government International Bureau of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, representing the G4+ Steering Committee, chaired the repeat session. The Best Practices discussed included: Improving Living Environments Through Comprehensive Local Policy, Gothenburg, Sweden; Tehran's Action Plans for Improving the Living Environment, Iran; The Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project, United Republic of Tanzania; and Hamilton-Wentworth's Sustainable Community, Canada.

13. Parallel Session III, "Special Presentations", was co-chaired over two days; H.E. Ms. G. Thurdin, Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, chaired the first session; and H.E. Mrs. Pamela Mboya, Permanent Representative of Kenya to UNCHS (Habitat), chaired the repeat session. The Best Practices discussed included: Serviced Land Project, Cape Town, South Africa; the Small and Micro Enterprises Project, Alexandria Businessmen's Association, Egypt; Post-Disaster Reconstruction and Rehabilitation in Anhui, China; Sustainable Communities, Chattanooga, Tennessee, United States of America; Improving Living Environments for Low-Income Households in Saudi Arabia; and the Swedish Union of Tenants, Sweden.

14. A special presentation on Chinese cities was organized on Day Three. Two presentations were made of the Habitat Global Best Practices Database and electronic catalogue.

15. An exposition was held throughout the Conference including exhibitions from China; the Dubai Municipality; India; Kenya; Lebanon; the Netherlands; the City of Tilburg; the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and UNCHS (Habitat).

16. The Concluding Session, "Transferring Knowledge, Know-How and Expertise Through Best Practices", was chaired by Mr. Jaime Ravinet, Mayor of Santiago de Chile. Ms. Outi Berghall from the Finnish National Committee for Habitat II made a presentation on the exchange of Best Practices at the national level. A representative of the Group 4+ Associations of Local Authorities made a presentation on decentralized cooperation and the transfer of good practice. A panel discussion followed including representatives from the Group 4+ Associations of Local Authorities, ICLEI, Mega-Cities Inc., the University of Seattle, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNCHS (Habitat).

II. DISCUSSIONS

17. The Conference recommended to the Preparatory Committee and the "City Summit" that the following considerations be added to complement the already adopted criteria of tangible impact, partnerships and sustainability for selection of those Best Practices worthy of global dissemination:

a/ leadership in inspiring action and change, including change in public policy;
b/ promotion of accountability and transparency;
c/ empowerment of people, neighbourhoods and communities and incorporation of their contributions;
d/ acceptance of, and responsiveness to, social and cultural diversity;
e/ potential for transferability, adaptability and replicability;
f/ appropriateness to local conditions and levels of development; and
g/ promotion of social equality and equity.

18. Additional consideration was also given to strengthening the unified reporting format to enhance dissemination of Best Practices by:

a/ ready and user-friendly access in all the major languages to concise summary information outlining the essential elements and giving contact details for follow-up inquiries;
b/ formation of international networks to assess innovation, creativity and transferability of practices at various levels of development;
c/ establishment, with the international associations of local authorities and other stakeholders, of national and regional focal points to advise on the usefulness and on-going refinement of the system;
d/ formation of international networks to assess the extent to which participatory processes are used, and diverse interests and needs, particularly those related to gender differences, are assessed; and
e/ development and use of indicators for participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, disaggregated by gender and age.

19. The steps taken by UNCHS regarding the establishment of a global electronic catalogue on Best Practices were welcomed. Its formats include the Internet, CD-ROM, diskette and the print medium.

20. All governments, local authorities and their associations, United Nations agencies, NGOs, CBOs, professional associations and the private sector were encouraged to work towards a common reporting format to greatly enhance and facilitate the transfer of information, experience and expertise to their respective end-users. These same organizations were also encouraged to explore mechanisms for compilation, systemic analysis and assessment of Best Practices as an integral part of the follow-up process beyond the Habitat II Conference.

III. ACTION TAKEN

21. The Dubai Municipality announced the establishment of the Dubai Award for Best Practices which will be administered in collaboration with UNCHS (Habitat) for an annual amount of US$ 150,000.

22. The Dubai Declaration was adopted and UNCHS (Habitat) was called upon to present it as a part of the official events of the Habitat II Conference at Istanbul.